



Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7461st meeting

Thursday, 11 June 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
<i>Members:</i>	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaite
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ilichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ...	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Klein
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2015/339)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

(spoke in English)

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2015/339)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/339, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

I now give the floor to Mr. Bathily.

Mr. Bathily *(spoke in French)*: I have the honour to introduce the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/339) on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). The report provides an update on the threats to peace and security in Central Africa. It also includes a review of the activities carried out by UNOCA over the past six months in cooperation with Member States and subregional organizations.

Since the publication of the Secretary-General's previous report in November 2014 (S/2014/812), the political and security situation in the subregion has remained a source of concern. Central Africa is again marked by growing pre-electoral tensions; the economic crisis worsened by the falling price of crude in the oil-producing countries of the region; rising youth unemployment; terrorist activities, particularly those committed by Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army; and the cross-border impact of crises in a number of countries in the region, such as the Central African Republic and Burundi.

With regard to the ongoing crisis in the Central African region, the Central African Republic continues to have regional and multidimensional consequences, with nearly half a million refugees, ongoing gross violations of human rights, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, growing gang-related criminality and environmental degradation in refugee areas. At the request of the Head of State of the transition and with the agreement of the international mediator, President Sassou Nguesso of Congo, in early May I chaired the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation and worked in close consultation with the international mediators and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, Mr. Babacar Gaye. That included working to defuse pre-Forum tensions, discouraging spoilers, advising participants, including representatives of the armed groups, ensuring inclusivity and transparency, facilitating ownership of the process by Central Africans and keeping all actors mindful of a long-term vision for peace in that country.

The Forum concluded on 11 May with the signing of a number of key documents, including the republican pact for peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction in the Central African Republic and an agreement on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). I wish to acknowledge the transitional authorities, and particularly the citizens of the Central African Republic, for that success. Moving forward, it will be critical to capitalize on the momentum generated by the Forum and to mobilize the required resources for the elections and DDR.

Boko Haram remained a serious threat to the Lake Chad Basin region. The dire humanitarian situation in the region, resulting from attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram, continued to affect the population, including hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in Cameroon and Chad. Insecurity and insufficient resources continued to strain the already stretched response capacities of Governments and United Nations entities in the affected countries.

The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) demonstrated its commitment to address the Boko Haram threat during several summits of Heads of State and Government in which I represented the Secretary-General. The deployment

of Chadian troops to the border areas of Cameroon and Nigeria and the recent inauguration of the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force on Boko Haram (MNJTF) signalled increasing cooperation between States in the fight against Boko Haram. Military operations have put Boko Haram on the defensive, but recent attacks by the terrorist group highlight the need for the affected States to remain vigilant and engaged. While the fight against Boko Haram is not over, we must start looking ahead to the stabilization phase in order to secure military gains. That will involve international support and regional commitment for candidly examining and addressing the root causes of violent extremism.

UNOCA remained both politically and technically engaged in supporting the countries of the region address the impact of Boko Haram's activities, in close collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA). My Office, supported efforts to develop a coordinated humanitarian response and to advance the operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task Force. I undertook a diplomatic tour of UNOWA with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Chambas to engage the leaders of Boko Haram-affected countries. We will continue to support the region's collective response to the Boko Haram threat.

The Lord's Resistance Army continued to pose a threat to regional security, particularly to populations in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the period under review, in spite of ongoing efforts, the number of abductions unfortunately increased. More than 200,000 persons still remain displaced across the region. The group is also involved in the illicit trade in natural resources to finance its activities.

The surrender of senior LRA commander Dominic Ongwen in January 2015, and his subsequent transfer to the International Criminal Court, marks a significant step forward with regard to criminal justice. Ongwen's removal from the battlefield sends a strong message to remaining LRA fighters and signifies that international efforts to combat the group within the framework of the regional strategies of the United Nations and the African Union are bearing fruit.

UNOCA remained actively engaged on the LRA issue to ensure the implementation of the United Nations Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the LRA and to ensure

international coordination through the convening of the biannual coordination meeting of LRA focal points. UNOCA also worked in close collaboration with the African Union to ensure the political commitment of LRA-affected countries to this cause. The African Union Special Envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army Issue, General Jackson Tuwei, and I met with the Ugandan authorities in Kampala to emphasize the importance of the Government's sustained political and operational commitment to the African Union Regional Task Force. I would like to express my gratitude for the work undertaken in that process by the African Union Regional Task Force, whose mandate was recently renewed, on 18 May, by the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea continued to pose serious security threats and to have economic consequences for Central Africa and West African States. In coordination with UNOWA, UNOCA continued working with the States concerned to consolidate their efforts in combating maritime insecurity.

Central Africa remained plagued by cross-border criminal activities, including the illicit trade in wildlife to support the activities of armed groups such as the LRA. Further to the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and ECCAS, UNOCA will support Central Africa in the development of a subregional strategy to tackle the growing phenomenon of poaching.

Central Africa has entered an electoral cycle that will conclude in 2018. Political tensions in the run-up to elections are on the rise in some countries. Issues related to amending constitutional term limits are dividing electorates. Violent confrontations have led to the loss of lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi. There are simmering social grievances, which are exacerbated by the economic contraction in the subregion's many oil-producing States.

In that context, I continued to use the good offices of the Secretary-General to engage political stakeholders across the subregion and encourage the peaceful resolution of disputes. As a result of the support provided by UNOCA and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, journalists from Central Africa adopted a code of conduct that articulates their responsibilities in support of peaceful electoral processes. UNOCA also organized the third

meeting of United Nations presences in Central Africa, held on 18 May, which focused on increasing internal coherence and efficacy in preventing and managing electoral violence in the subregion. A meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa took place in Luanda on 4 June, with the assistance of UNOCA. The meeting adopted ministerial declarations on Burundi and the Central African Republic to reaffirm the region's support.

Despite the many challenges they face, Central African leaders have undertaken important initiatives in the interests of their populations. On 6 May, the Heads of State of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) decided to implement the free movement of peoples in the six countries of the CEMAC zone, signalling a major step towards greater regional integration. Meanwhile, ECCAS Heads of State continued to work collectively in the Central African Republic as well as in response to the instability caused by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin region. ECCAS Heads of State also decided to appoint a special envoy for Burundi and the Great Lakes region to appeal to the Burundian parties to seek to resolve their differences through peaceful means. UNOCA will continue to support these and other subregional initiatives that advance long-term stability.

The report before the Council also presents the findings and recommendations of the recent strategic review of UNOCA's mandate and activities. Since its establishment five years ago, UNOCA has demonstrated its added value in a fragile subregion with enormous internal and cross-border security challenges. The Secretary-General encourages Member States to support the recommendations of the strategic review. With the continued support of this body, UNOCA shall continue to be a steadfast partner to the Central African States in the promotion of peace and stability.

The President: I thank Mr. Bathily for his briefing.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/12.

It is so decided.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.